



AETC News Clips

Air Force Times



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New training helo

The Air Force was to roll out the latest version of the venerable Huey helicopter, the TH-1H, on Nov. 5 at Randolph Air Force Base.

The largest version of the TH-1H has upgraded components and a new avionics suite with a glass cockpit.

“The TH-1H’s advanced electronics provide expanded training opportunities and improved operational capabilities by upgrading the engine, transmission and rotor system,” said Brig. Gen. Richard E. Perraut, Air Education and Training Command’s director of plans and programs.

He said the helo gives aircrews a “seamless transition” from the T-6 to a follow-on rotary wing aircraft such as the CV-22 Osprey, Combat Search and Rescue X and Common Vertical Lift Support Platform helicopters.

By 2009, the Air Force is scheduled to have 24 TH-1Hs.



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Recruit dies after PT run at Lackland

By [Rod Hafemeister](#)

Times staff writer

SAN ANTONIO — An Air Force recruit in his first week of Basic Military Training collapsed during a physical training run Oct. 29 and died soon after, Lackland Air Force Base officials said.

Joshua Rolfe, 19, collapsed during a 1.5-mile run. He was transported to Wilford Hall Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead at 7:30 a.m.

Rolfe, from Danville, Ohio, had arrived at Lackland on Oct. 25 to begin six weeks of basic training.

He was assigned to the 322nd Training Squadron, officials said.

Base officials were unable by Nov. 3 to provide information on how long it took for Rolfe to receive medical attention after he collapsed.

The cause of death had not been determined as of Nov. 3, pending the results of autopsy tests, said base spokesman Oscar Balladares.

Rolfe was posthumously promoted to airman basic, Balladares said. Lackland's 37th Training Wing held a memorial service for Rolfe on Nov. 2.

"The team Lackland family sends its condolences to the family and friends of trainee Joshua Rolfe as well as to the members of the 322nd Training Squadron," said Brig. Gen. Mary Kay Hertog, 37th Training Wing commander, in a statement.

Counselors visited the 322nd after the death.

Rolfe is the first trainee to die at Lackland since May 2002 and the 12th to die since 1986. More than 500,000 trainees have passed through basic at Lackland during that time, officials said. Details of the other 11 recruits who have died:

- Oct. 14, 1986. Airman Basic Ronald Bandy died of cardiopulmonary arrest during a physical conditioning run.
- Jan. 2, 1987. Airman Basic Joseph Williams died of cardiopulmonary arrest during a physical conditioning run.
- Nov. 11, 1990. Airman Basic Jason Bulmon died of cardiopulmonary arrest during a physical conditioning run.
- April 22, 1991. Airman Basic David M. Smith died of hemolytic streptococcal shock syndrome, not associated with physical conditioning.



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- Jan. 13, 1993. Airman Basic Kosygin G. Grady died of hypotrophic myocardopathy, not associated with physical conditioning.
- Jan. 14, 1993. Airman Basic Eric O. Williams died of rhabdomyolysis, not associated with physical conditioning.
- Feb. 9, 1993. Airman Basic William Stevens died of spirococal meningitis, not associated with physical conditioning.
- Sept. 3, 1994. Airman Basic Andre D. West died of acute cardiac dysrhythmia, not associated with physical conditioning.
- Sept. 12, 1999. Airman Basic Micah Schindler died of heat stroke complicated by overhydration during Field Training Experience march-out.
- June 14, 2001. Airman Basic Darryll M. Logans died of a cardiac arrhythmia secondary to hypertrophy of the left ventricle of the heart during a physical conditioning run.
- May 24, 2002. Airman Basic Stephen Fortune died of a ruptured aortic aneurysm during the Warrior Week Confidence Course run.

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Little Rock AFB, Ark.



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New C-130J planes undergoing testing at LRAFB

By DANIEL CONNOLLY
Associated Press Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Ark. (AP) -- The Little Rock Air Force Base is participating in final testing of the C-130J cargo plane for certain missions. The plane is the latest generation of an aircraft that has been part of the nation's arsenal since the 1950s. The military is testing four C-130J's at the base in Jacksonville then will test the planes at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska. The new plane is already used for a wide range of combat and non-combat missions. But the latest round of testing is meant to ensure that the plane can be used in combat zones for missions including flying with other versions of the C-130 and dropping supplies while flying in formation, said Air Force spokesman Capt. John Sheets. Monday, the military invited a group of news reporters to view one of the planes. The C-130's relatively small size allows the chubby plane to land on short, rough runways and come close to the combat zone. The latest model's distinctive six-bladed propellers distinguish it from the earlier versions. At 112 feet, the plane is also longer and more technologically advanced than earlier models. And the plane has a sophisticated feedback system for diagnosing its own problems in flight and after it lands. "This is more like a flying computer," said Staff Sgt. James Mossett, who maintains the aircraft. The engines of the C-130J are more powerful than earlier models, meaning it can fly faster and can stop faster when its engines are reversed. That increases its ability to land on a short runway. "It's very agile in a low-level environment," said Maj. Dave Flynn, a pilot. Starting in early October, pilots tested the plane's performance in missions including formation flying as well as dropping equipment and supplies from its large rear door in midair, Flynn said. That phase of testing wrapped up Friday. The next phase will involve simulated combat zone landings with flights between Little Rock and Fort Polk, La. Crew members will wear night vision goggles and flak jackets. The planes will also drop paratroopers as part of a larger military exercise. The planes will then fly to Alaska for a round of cold-weather testing before Air Force officials make a final decision on approving them for those combat missions, Flynn said. "The feedback so far is that it's going very well," he said. The Little Rock Air Force Base has trained flight and maintenance crews to use the C-130Js since 2003 and four of the planes are assigned to the base. The base is home to 73 C-130s and employs about 5,700 people.



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Latest C-130 in tests at air base

Officials say cargo plane performing well in evaluations

BY ANDY DAVIS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

The C-130 J cargo plane, an aircraft considered important to the future of Little Rock Air Force Base, has performed well in recent tests that will determine whether the plane is ready for combat, base officials said Tuesday.

Maj. Dave Flynn, who is supervising the test flights at the base near Jacksonville, said the plane showed “outstanding” performance during the evaluation’s first portion, which began early last month and ended Friday.

Over the next few weeks, pilots from the base will test the plane in simulated combat situations in Fort Polk, La. The plane will then be flown to Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska for a week of testing in cold weather, Flynn said.

“We look at it as kind of a graduation phase for the airplane to get it fully ready for combat,” said Flynn, a pilot instructor with the 48th Airlift Squadron.

So far, he said, “everything with the operations test has gone as planned.”

“We’ve got all the missions completed, and they’ve been on track and on target with no problems,” Flynn said.

The tests are a final hurdle for the J model, the latest version of a cargo plane that has been in service for decades.

Little Rock Air Force Base houses 73 C-130 s and is home to the largest fleet of the planes in the world. It received its first J model last year and now has six of the planes, two of which are on loan from other bases. Instructors at the base near Jacksonville teach pilots from around the country and other nations to fly the planes.

The first phase of the Air Force’s evaluation, conducted in 1999 and 2000, cleared the aircraft to perform “air land” missions in which the aircraft lands at a location to deliver troops or supplies on the ground. The latest round of tests will determine whether the aircraft is cleared to drop troops and equipment from the air.

The tests are being conducted on four airplanes on loan from bases in California, Maryland, Mississippi and Rhode Island, said 1st Lt. Jon Quinlan, a spokesman for the base’s 314th Airlift Wing.

Pilots from the 48th Airlift Squadron, along with pilots from Rhode Island, are flying the missions under the observation of an evaluation team from Edwards Air Force base in California and employees of Lockheed Martin, which makes the aircraft.

Over the past few weeks, the pilots practiced air drops at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock and in a field on government-owned property about 50 miles north of the air base, Flynn said. The pilots also flew in formation with older C-130 models and tested the compatibility of the models’ communication systems.

At Fort Polk, pilots will practice landing in combat zones and dropping troops from the air, Flynn said. After the tests in Alaska, evaluators will compile the results of the tests and determine whether the planes will be cleared for the full array of missions they were designed to perform.

“The feedback we’ve gotten so far is that it’s going very well,” Flynn said.

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Compared with the older Emodel C-130 s, the C-130 J has a more powerful engine as well as updated computerized navigation and other avionics equipment. The J model also can fly farther and land in smaller spaces.

Last year, a report by the Department of Defense's Office of the Inspector General found that the Air Force and the Defense Department had mismanaged the C-130 J program by spending millions of dollars on planes that failed to meet specifications.

Peter Simmons, a spokesman for Lockheed Martin, said that problems identified in previous evaluations have been fixed. The U.S. military has four of the J-model planes deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and several other countries are also using the planes in combat operations in the region, he said.

"The aircraft is operating extremely well, extremely reliably," Simmons said. "What this last round of testing is doing is validating all that. Now the testing community can have the paperwork to say, 'Yes, the aircraft can do everything we want it to do.' "

The planes cost \$60 million to \$70 million each, depending on how they are equipped, Simmons said. The Air Force has 42 of the planes and has orders for 36 more, he said. The Marines also have ordered 20 planes outfitted as tankers, he said.